

## Welcome to the thirtieth edition of DASH

This edition features articles from the following individuals and organisations:

- Informing Choices NI's Director of Advocacy and Policy, Ruairi Rowan, reports on a new survey of MLAs which shows overwhelming political support to reform the provision of RSE in schools.
- Relate NI's Communications and Engagement Manager, Stevie Maginn, highlights a recent poll of the general public regarding RSE.
- Karen Walker, Schools Service Manager, NSPCC NI, discusses their Speak out Stay safe programme.
- Joe Harris, Sexual Health Lead, Sexual Health Training Team, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, discusses developments in RSE and support for teachers.

In our Horizons feature the CEO of Common Youth, Arlene McLaren, reflects on the organisation's 30-year history, the impact of Covid-19 and new developments within the organisation.

**ICNI is contracted by the Public Health Agency to write and produce DASH.**

Showcase your project, publicise an event or comment on this edition by contacting the editor, Ruairi Rowan, by email [ruairi.rowan@informingchoicesni.org](mailto:ruairi.rowan@informingchoicesni.org) or telephone **028 9031 6100**

# PHARMACY FIRST SERVICE

## Emergency Hormonal Contraception

by Ruairi Rowan, Director of Advocacy and Policy, ICNI

A Pharmacy First Service for emergency hormonal contraception (EHC) is now available from participating community pharmacies across Northern Ireland.

The service will ensure that women and young people aged 13 years and over have timely access to sexual health advice and free EHC when clinically indicated. The service also includes the provision of bridging contraception.

The aims of the service include:

1. Increasing the knowledge, especially amongst younger women, of the availability of EHC and bridging hormonal contraception from community pharmacies.
2. Ensuring treatment is in line with best practice.
3. Increasing the knowledge of risks such as Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs).

Informing Choices NI has produced a new leaflet – Knowing Your Options: Before and after taking emergency contraception – which will be provided to people accessing the service and can be downloaded at the following link <https://informingchoicesni.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/kyo-contraception.pdf>

A list of participating pharmacies can be accessed here <https://hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/3289.htm>

**Pharmacy First** for help with everyday health conditions

HSC Health and Social Care

### The morning after pill

#### Emergency Hormonal Contraception

- ✓ **FREE** confidential and discreet service
- ✓ **FREE** supply of the morning after pill
- ✓ Available up to 120 hours after unprotected sex

I DON'T WANT TO GET PREGNANT



**Available from your local community pharmacy**

# Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) should be standardised in schools, say MLAs

by Ruairi Rowan, Director of Advocacy and Policy, ICNI

A new survey commissioned by Informing Choices NI (ICNI) shows overwhelming support amongst MLAs to reform the teaching of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in Northern Ireland. The results highlighted that only 17% of MLAs believe RSE in schools is 'satisfactory'.

78% agree that there should be a standardised curriculum used in all schools, regardless of their ethos, and 70% supported the introduction of a new Sexual Health Strategy which includes the implementation of consistent and inclusive RSE.

62% agree that children and young people should be taught about different family types, such as single parent, blended or same sex families, while 33% disagree.

60% agree that information regarding the availability of contraception and access to abortion should be included within RSE in all post-primary schools. Only 31% oppose this.

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has a legal duty to ensure that adolescents have access to age-appropriate, comprehensive and scientifically accurate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights, including prevention of early pregnancy and access to abortion. In July 2022 the former Secretary of State indicated that he was prepared to intervene to reform RSE, if the Department of Education failed to act.

ICNI believe that children and young people are being failed by the current provision of RSE which often leaves them unaware of their reproductive choices, unprepared when forming relationships and unlikely to experience inclusive education that is reflective of all family types.

Our survey results send a clear message to the Secretary of State that there is overwhelming political support to reform the teaching of RSE in Northern Ireland. We urge him to intervene to ensure that the law is implemented and that our children and young people are provided with the comprehensive and scientifically accurate information and support they need to make informed choices regarding their sexual and reproductive health.

ICNI believe all children and young people should have access to age-appropriate, comprehensive and scientifically accurate RSE in schools. RSE should start early and be relevant to children and young people at each stage of their development.

There should be a standardised RSE curriculum across all schools in Northern Ireland, including Special Educational Needs schools, regardless of their ethos. RSE should be inclusive, and facilitated by trainers who are confident in talking about all issues relevant to the subject.

RSE Awareness Training should be provided to all teaching staff. RSE programmes should be offered to parents and carers to alleviate any fears, and to assist them in supporting their children and young people in making informed choices.

All lessons should be assessed and evaluated to ensure consistency, with young people playing a key role in this process.

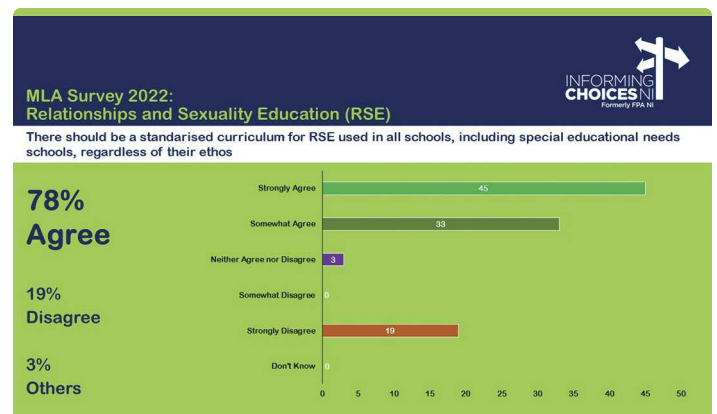
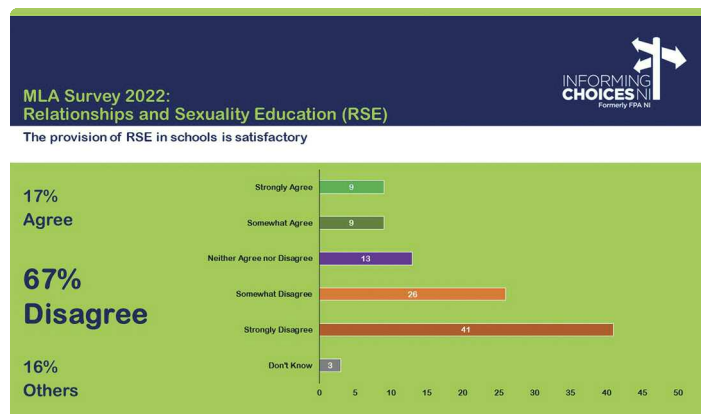
## SURVEY INFORMATION

Savanta ComRes, a London-based polling and research company, and Stratagem, who are part of the Connect Group, one of the UK's largest independent public affairs consultancies, jointly run the MLA Research Panel.

Savanta ComRes sought the views of MLAs using an online survey. The research was in the field between 17 June and 29 July 2022 during which time 30 MLAs completed the questionnaire anonymously.

Data undergoes a weighting process to ensure that the responses are representative of the composition of the Northern Ireland Assembly. Due to the weighting applied, percentages may not always add up to 100.

All work is undertaken in accordance with British Polling Council rules and is conducted strictly in keeping with the Market Research Society Code of Conduct.



# Poll shows only 27% of 16–34-year-olds found the RSE they received to be helpful

by Stevie Maginn, Communications and Engagement Manager, Relate NI

New research by relationships support charity Relate NI shows the inconsistency in the quality of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) that people in Northern Ireland (NI) have experienced over the years.

The survey results, which were released ahead of RSE Day on June 30th, showed that only 8% of people said that the RSE they received at school was 'very helpful' to them in navigating and maintaining healthy relationships. A further 19% said what they received was 'somewhat helpful.'

Meanwhile, 23% of those surveyed said that their experience of RSE was 'not very helpful' to them while an additional 24% 'did not find it helpful at all.'

23% of those surveyed do not remember receiving any RSE at all while at school, while 3% preferred not to say.

The statutory curriculum is designed to give schools and teachers flexibility in what they choose to include, or leave out. Relate NI believe this is leading to inconsistency in the quality of RSE that young people are receiving.

Commenting on the results, Relate NI Development Manager, Kellie O'Dowd, said:

*"High quality and evidence based RSE is about empowering children and young people to develop confidence and self-esteem by promoting healthy relationships and providing information on issues like puberty and consent."*

*"It is also about protecting children and young people by teaching them how to stay safe online; how to tackle inappropriate behaviour and to develop coping strategies. It also allows opportunities for young people to receive age-appropriate information about sexual health."*

*"By teaching young people about consent for example, we can protect them from sexual abuse and exploitation."*

*"However, the current situation provides a statutory framework for a postcode lottery of RSE for children and young people, with some having told us that for example same-sex relationships have not been featured in any meaningful way."*

A 2019 report from the Belfast Youth

Forum, 'Any Use?' highlighted that young people were more likely to learn about sex and relationships from their friends or peer groups (62%) or from social media (55%) than they were to learn about it through lessons at school. This can lead to a spread of misinformation among young people, which can result in unrealistic expectations, normalisation of abusive behaviour and increased anxieties around relationships and sexual health.

Over the past few years, various bodies have including the United Nations Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Sir John Gillen and the Expert Panels on Gender Equality and Sexual Orientation, have highlighted the importance of high quality RSE as a compulsory element of the curriculum for all school children.

A NI Assembly debate last year on a Strategy to Prevent Violence against Women and Girls also resulted in cross party support for a motion calling on the NI Executive "...to introduce standardised, comprehensive relationships and sexuality education in our schools..." as part of any forthcoming Strategy.

Kellie O'Dowd continued;  
*"Relate NI are once again calling for the standardisation of the curriculum of RSE across all schools, which is evidence-based, compulsory, age-appropriate, LGBTQ+ Inclusive & Sex Positive."*

*"In the meantime, we are working with our partners in Nexus and The Rainbow Project, to provide RSE workshops for 15-16-year-olds in a community setting."*

For more information on Relate NI's RSE service, visit

<https://www.relateni.org/services/>

## SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The survey, commissioned by Relate NI, polled 1,000 nationally representative general consumers in Northern Ireland between 22nd April and 29th April. The 16-34 cohort was made up of 303 participants.





# Speak out Stay safe programme

by Karen Walker, Schools Service Manager, NSPCC NI



At NSPCC Northern Ireland, we believe that teaching children and young people about healthy relationships, in an all-inclusive way, is a vitally important part of keeping children safe. We know that excellent quality Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is key for young people as it helps them understand the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships and also that they have a right to be safe, heard and respected.

We have been calling for the introduction of a core RSE curriculum in Northern Ireland for many years. The pandemic and successive lockdowns have seen a rise in all forms of abuse suffered by children and young people and it is clear that this education is now more important and urgent than ever before.

International research <sup>[1]</sup> shows that educational programmes can improve children's understanding of what constitutes abuse or inappropriate behaviour and can also increase the likelihood of young people coming forward to disclose experience of abuse. We want to see the prioritisation of the development and roll out of a core RSE curriculum in Northern Ireland, which is age and developmentally appropriate and accessible to all children and young people throughout their years at school, regardless of the ethos of their school.

This curriculum must address the child's right to be safe and what constitutes

healthy and unhealthy relationships, both online and offline, and ensure that all children and young people are taught to recognise abuse and know how and when to speak to a trusted adult about any worries or concerns. It should also be designed to respond to the needs of children

and young people as they mature.

NSPCC Northern Ireland has already been working to promote and support healthy relationships in primary schools in Northern Ireland through our Speak out Stay safe programme. This is a preventative education programme which teaches children about their rights and supports RSE by helping children to understand and recognise abuse in all its forms, including neglect, bullying, sexual abuse, physical abuse, and emotional abuse, online and offline. It also shows children how to seek help and the sources of help available to them, including the NSPCC's Childline service.

This is all presented in a fun, interactive, and engaging manner and NSPCC Northern Ireland supports teachers to deliver the first lesson and activities, alongside playing two NSPCC online assemblies to their pupils. There are bespoke versions for children aged 4-7 and 8-11 years-olds, and versions in British Sign Language and adapted for children with special educational needs are also available.

Aided by the speech bubble character, Buddy, children learn key safeguarding messages and how to identify trusted sources of support. Teachers will also share relevant resources and materials with children and parents for use outside of the classroom, and follow-up workshops delivered by NSPCC volunteers are offered to primary schools for smaller groups of children aged 9-11.

The aim of Speak out Stay safe is to reach every child, in every school, in Northern Ireland once every three years, so every child receives this information twice during their primary school years. The programme is supported by independent evaluation, which shows statistically significant improvements in children's understanding of all forms of abuse and their ability to identify at least one trusted adult with whom to share concerns (ages 7-11).

The NSPCC wants to protect children of all ages and our goal is to help teachers confidently deliver RSE. In addition to Speak Out Stay Safe, we have recently launched a new service called Talk Relationships, which aims to support secondary education settings across the UK to confidently deliver sex and relationships education. The free resources include an e-learning course for teachers preparing to teach RSE, lesson plans which focus on a range of topics included in the curriculum and a dedicated helpline to provide advice and guidance to secondary school educators who deliver sex education.

<sup>[1]</sup> Walsh K, Zwi K, Woolfenden S, Shlonsky A (2015) *School-based education programmes for the prevention of child sexual abuse (Review)*, Cochrane Database of Systematic



# HORIZONS FEATURE

## In the lead up to Common Youth's 30th birthday celebration their CEO, Arlene McLaren, reflects on their history, the impact of Covid-19 and new developments

### Why was the organisation formed, and what have been your proudest achievements?

Common Youth (formerly Brook NI) was formed back at the start of the 1990's, in response to the high number of teenage pregnancies within the then Eastern Health and Social Services Board. Two conferences were held and one of the outcomes that was proposed was the formation of a clinical service dedicated to young people. It was thanks to Dr Gabriel Scally, the then Chief Medical Officer, who invited Brook Young People to set up in Northern Ireland. Despite strong opposition from religious groups and politicians Brook NI opened its doors for the first time on 19 September 1992. On that day one brave lone young woman, walked through large crowds of noisy protestors, to exercise her right to access a service which she was legally entitled. Since then, there have been over 210,000 visits from young people and 30 years on from the establishment of Brook NI, Common Youth remains a crucial resource for young people in Northern Ireland. Young people are at the forefront of everything that we do at Common Youth, and it has been their voices that have guided us to develop our services over the last 30 years. We are proud of the role we have had in the reduction of teenage pregnancy rates and the increase of young people accessing sexual health services. Establishing a 7 day a week walk in service, developing our STI and counselling services and introducing our boys and young men's clinic must also be included in our achievements but receiving feedback that young people report a positive experience accessing our service and improved their sexual health and wellbeing outcomes is our proudest achievement.

### What services do you provide? Clinical services

- Contraception service including emergency contraception

- Pregnancy testing
- STI service including testing and treatment
- Information and education in relation to sexual health to young people and professionals
- Counselling including psychosexual counselling, pre- and post-abortion counselling, and access to a counsellor during clinic sessions
- Signposting to specialist services where required
- Boys and young men's clinic.
- Well-being support (1-to-1 and group based)

### Education and training

- Relationships and sexuality education in the community and schools.
- Training for professionals

### Advocacy

- Common Youth participation group
- Young person on Board of Trustees
- Contribution to campaigns, steering and implementation groups and strategic bodies

### What challenges have you faced because of Covid-19, and how have things changed with the ending of lockdown restrictions?

Common Youth's clinic remained open throughout COVID and provided an essential service for those young people who needed it. More than ever young people needed a safe, confidential, and caring environment to access services. Young people faced many challenges during this unsettling time and having a service that remained open for walk-ins was extremely important. We had 4,563 consultations in that first year! In true Common youth style, we moved very quickly in developing new, creative ways of working with young people. We adapted the service for example by introducing telephone consultations and a postal and delivery service for prescriptions. The education and training and advocacy elements of our work



moved quickly online, adopting various software packages and communication platforms. Interactive resources and sessions are part of the 'new normal' and have served to enhance our delivery. Staying open for clients throughout the pandemic required a substantial amount of work in relation to risk assessments, health and safety and re-modelling our approach, which has only enhanced our service delivery going forward. With the ending of lockdown restrictions, we have found clients are now dropping into the clinic not only for their sexual health and reproductive needs but also to talk to staff about their emotional wellbeing and mental health needs.

### Has the organisation undertaken any new activities recently?

Responding to the emerging mental health and well-being needs of young people and following a successful pilot, Common Youth secured funding for a full-time counsellor. In addition, Common Youth has significantly expanded our delivery in schools driven by our Training and Development Coordinator, and we continue to develop our well-being work providing practical solutions for young people to improve their mental health and well-being.

### How do you see the Common Youth developing over the coming years?

Common Youth continues to listen to young people and develop services to meet their needs. We are at an early stage of exploration, but we are keen to improve access to our clinical service for young people with learning disabilities. We are keen to improve access for under-represented groups and provide an inclusive and supportive service which meets their needs.

For more information about the services at Common Youth call **028 9032 8866** or email **hello@commonyouth.com** or visit **www.commonyouth.com**

# RSE Ready? Supporting teachers in the delivery of RSE

by Joe Harris, Sexual Health Lead, Sexual Health Training Team, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

The Sexual Health Training Team, within the Belfast Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust's Health Improvement Department, has, from the late 1980's been active in delivering a wide range of sexual health training programmes, workshops and events. These activities include the management and delivery of HIV Training for Trainers (HIV T4T), mandatory HIV Awareness training for HSC Staff, and the management and delivery of the Annual Regional Sexual Health Conference for Northern Ireland.

From the late 1990's the Team further developed its activities to include the delivery of teacher professional learning for Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE), supporting teachers from within Primary, Post-Primary and Special Educational Needs schools. Observed through local trends in teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, abortion, domestic and sexual violence to name but a few, the necessity and role of RSE in schools was further fortified and reinforced within emergent legal frameworks, strategies, action plans and curriculum development, aimed at addressing these significant health issues.

The RSE training models developed and delivered by the Sexual Health Training Team is set around the belief and principle that teachers are highly skilled professional educators, uniquely well placed to provide accessible, consistent and reliable education, support, information and care, to children and young people throughout the key stages of their development. There is significant opportunity for a cost-efficient approach to be fulfilled through such school-based programmes, with a staff of over 21,000 teachers employed throughout our schools, the environment where most young people spend a significant span of their early life. The aim of the Team's RSE Teacher Professional Learning is to support teachers to improve their confidence and competence in the key areas of RSE that will help improve the planning and delivery of high quality, rights based RSE, supporting the mission of achieving positive sexual health and wellbeing for every young person in their schools.

## Support for RSE in schools

Health Education in schools has been an integral part of the statutory curriculum since 2001. Here it is designed to be

delivered both through the science programme of study, and through the cross-curricular theme of Health Education, with RSE embedded within the Northern Ireland Curriculum as a statutory component of the Personal Development strand of Learning for Life and Work (LLW). Furthermore supported by educational organisations such as the non-departmental public body, CCEA, and, CCMS, the managing authority for Catholic Maintained Schools in Northern Ireland, through recently updated RSE guidance, which supports the planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of RSE in schools. CCEA expanded the support it offers through the provision of the RSE Hub, an online portal offering teachers access to an ever-expanding array of topic-based resources and guidance, alongside signposting to training and additional support. Further enhanced by its recently launched and continually evolving RSE Progression Framework, a non-statutory progression pathway for RSE from the Foundation Stage to post-16, which shows how the different themes cover the priority areas of RSE, including:

- Consent. What it means and its importance
- Developments in contraception
- Domestic and sexual violence and abuse
- Healthy, positive sexual expression and relationships
- LGBTQ+ matters
- Menstrual wellbeing
- Safe use of the internet
- Social media and its effects on relationships and self-esteem
- Teen parenting

## Areas for Improvement

The Education Training Inspectorate (ETI) has identified a positive shift in school based RSE, recognising that progress has been made in recent years, with a greater recognition of the role and importance of RSE in schools. However, despite this progress and the profiling of high quality RSE through several strands of structural support such as the Minimum Content Order and a range of Education led RSE Guidance frameworks, the ETI found that improvements are needed. A number of recommended for improvement were highlighted for schools to review and action, to ensure effective provision of RSE, including:





- Reviewing their policies, procedures and practices to take account of ETI's evaluation;
- Addressing gaps in practice such as development of RSE policy and auditing where RSE sits within the curriculum;
- Guidance for handling sensitive issues;
- Reviewing the school's model of delivery;
- Implementing procedures to support robust self-evaluation of RSE; and
- Making whole-school staff development in RSE a key priority in their School Development Plan.

These findings and recommendations along with recognition of progress are reflected within the 'Any Use?' report, a youth engagement initiative led by the Belfast City Council Youth Forum, which included survey feedback from 771 young people aged 14-24. The survey results found:

- 14- to 16-year-olds were more likely to say that they had received RSE in school than those aged 17 years or over;
- 78% of young people expressed that schools were the best place to receive RSE; and
- the majority of young people, some 60%, expressed that teachers were who they felt should deliver RSE;
- 40% of young people expressed that they found the information they had received to be useful or very useful.

## Challenges and opportunities

Along with areas for improvement, the 'Any Use?' report findings reinforce the importance and value that young people place on high quality RSE delivered by teachers within their schools.

Many of the necessary components of RSE in schools are in place, and evolving to reflect young people's needs, including:

- a legal framework that supports teachers in their delivery of a rights based RSE curriculum;
- frameworks and guidance that supports auditing, planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of RSE;
- Opportunities to learn from and listen further to the voices of young people about their RSE priorities; and,
- An ever-increasing body of resources and materials that are freely available and that support every aspect of the RSE curriculum.

With this deep and wide infrastructure, there remains a key and very significant challenge, as reported by ETI, which found that teachers' find RSE the least comfortable curriculum area to deliver. The Sexual Health Training Team continues to provide tailored learning experiences for teachers on their RSE journey, with a respectful and considered approach involving one-to-one support, Whole School RSE development activities and through the online 'RSE Ready?' modular Teacher professional learning program. We will continue in these efforts to address this challenge, by valuing and supporting teachers and providing the space, place and time to nurture every teacher. Building confidence and further developing competencies along with practical experiences of positive facilitation. To share and learn not just about concerns, but also the 'can do's' and 'this is how we do it's'; encouragement; showcasing good practice and engaging in ongoing professional learning that sets out and shapes a positive vision and mission for RSE and every teacher's role within it.

For further information about 'RSE Ready?' One-to-one, and Whole School RSE Support, or upcoming sexual health events, please contact: Joe Harris, Sexual Health Lead, Sexual Health Training Team, Health Improvement, Belfast HSC Trust at [shealth.team@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:shealth.team@belfasttrust.hscni.net)

# SAVE THE DATE




## 27th

# Annual Regional Sexual Health Conference for NI

**BOOK YOUR  
PLACE AT  
CONFERENCE  
HERE**

Every year this event brings together a wide range of experts who present up-to-date research and activities from throughout the UK and Ireland through keynote presentations and interactive workshops.

**Morning speakers will focus on:-**

- Regional GU Medicine Update
- Sexual & Reproductive Health & the Menopause
- Sexual Health – Where are We Now & How We Improve (PHA/DoH)
- SH&U App

**Workshop Topics will include:-**

- Coping, Resilience & HIV
- Women's AID – Innovative Project
- Relationships & Sexuality Education (RSE)
- Contraceptive Services Through SH24
- Approaches to Improve Sexual & Reproductive Health and Rights of Boys & Men
- Sexual & Reproductive Health and Abortion in NI
- Rainbow Project's 'State of the Community' LGBTQIA+ Research Findings
- Monkeypox

..... and much more!

For more information, please contact, [shealth.team@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:shealth.team@belfasttrust.hscni.net)



## Sexual Health & Wellbeing Challenges, Progress & Opportunities

**Wed 16th Nov 2022**  
 9 am Registration – 5 pm Close  
 An Online Event  
 Hosted on ZOOM

**Delegate Rate:- £20.00 pp**

# REMEMBER HOW MUCH YOU LOVE THEM THE RELATIONSHIP MOT

Relate NI

Do you want to remind your partner how much you love them? Do you want to have better sex? Do you want a better balance between your leisure time and household chores or childcare? Then Relate NI's 'Relationship MOT' may be for you.

Designed to be an accessible way for couples to check in with each other under the guidance of an expert relationship counsellor, the Relationship MOT can help you communicate more effectively, argue better, increase intimacy and love more passionately. Tiernan & Laura who live in Belfast were the first to trial the MOT for Relate NI.

Tiernan said: "I found the Relationship MOT an excellent method of focusing on where we work as a couple and just as importantly, where we need to work. It was professional, insightful and well worth the time. It has reminded us of how much we have to be proud of in our relationship and why it is so

important to occasionally review it with experts."

Laura added; "I would definitely recommend using the Relationship MOT service as a bit of a check-in with your partner. I thought how the counsellor was able to steer the conversation was very insightful and nuanced. The MOT reminded us about why we are great together but also the importance of communication and respect. Our counsellor provided an outside perspective which immediately helped us to agree that we needed to stop and think with more kindness and empathy for each other especially when stressed or pissed off. We both felt that our counsellor's excellent and gentle facilitation was quite invigorating. So many positives!"

Every year you take your car for an MOT, so why not take your relationship for one too? Find out more at [www.relateni.org/relateni-services](http://www.relateni.org/relateni-services)

## SEXUAL HEALTH HELPLINE 028 9031 6100

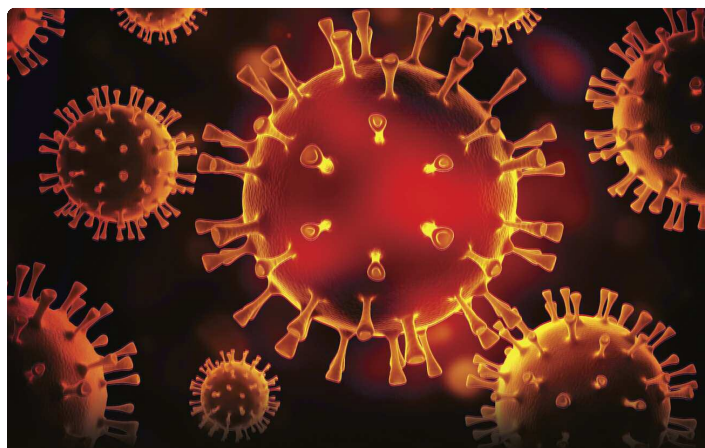
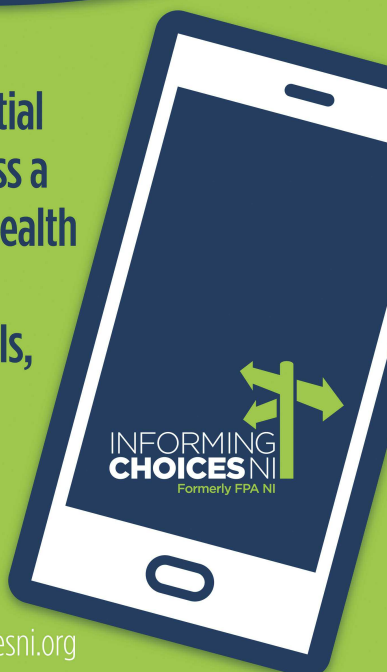
Monday to Friday 9am-5pm

Our helpline can provide confidential information across a range of sexual health areas including contraception, STIs, pregnancy and abortion.

 @ICNI2019

 /InformingChoicesNI

 [www.informingchoicesni.org](http://www.informingchoicesni.org)



## Preventing the spread of infection

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and save lives, everyone should be trying to follow social distancing measures as much as possible. Like seasonal flu, the same public health advice applies for COVID-19: if you cough or sneeze, use a tissue to cover your mouth and nose, throw it away carefully after use, and wash your hands.

The best way to prevent the spread of infections, including COVID-19, is good personal hygiene. This means washing your hands well and often, using soap and water and drying them with paper towels.